

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ADP-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10

NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 USIA-12 TRSE-00 MBFR-03

SAJ-01 DODE-00 SS-15 NSC-10 H-02 AID-20 ACDA-19 EB-11

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R 141515 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4452

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 1203

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MT, UK, LY, MILI, ETRN

SUBJ: TRAINING FOR LIBYAN AIR CONTROLLERS ON MALTA

COPENHAGEN FOR NATO DELEGATION

1. SUMMARY: BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER INFORMS US FOREIGN SECRETARY DOUGLAS HOME MAY RAISE WITH NATO COLLEAGUES QUESTION OF MALTESE ATTEMPT TO TRAIN LIBYAN AIR CONTROLLERS IN FIR OPERATIONS AT MALTA FIC. MALTA FIC LOCATED WITHIN RAF LUQA SECURE AREA. BRITISH ARE CONSIDERING REQUEST, BUT MAY ASK VIEW OF NATO ALLIES. END SUMMARY.

2. UK HIGH COMMISSIONER MORETON INFORMED US JUNE 14 THAT BRITISH ARE CONSIDERING REQUEST FOR TRAINING LIBYAN AIR CONTROLLERS IN FLIGHT INFORMATION CENTER ON MLATA AGAINST TIME WHEN LIBYAN OPERATES ITS OWN
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FLIGHT INFORMATION REGION.

3. QUESTION AROSE IN CURIOUS MANNER. MEDIUM LEVEL MALTESE CIVIL AVIATION OFFICIAL APPEARED AT RAF STATION LUQA AND ASKED FOR PASSES FOR THREE LIBYANS WHOM HE HAD IN TOW. PASSES WERE TO PERMIT THEM TO ENTER FIC IN ORDER TO OBSERVE CONTROL OPERATIONS FROM MALTA FIR AS TRAINING FOR LIBYA TAKING OVER ITS NEW FIR. SGT ON DUTY WAS ABOUT TO ISSUE PASSES, WHEN RAF OFFICER HAPPENED BY, STOPPED ISSUANCE AND REFERRED MATTER TO HIGH COMMISSIONER.

4. FOLLOWING MORNING, ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE TELEPHONED AND DEMANDED PASSES BE ISSUED BY FOLLOWING MORNING, JUNE 13 TH. HIGH COMMISSIONER REPLIED EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN GOM AND UKG PROVIDED THAT FIC WOULD BE OPERATED ONLY BY MALTESE OR NATO NATIONALS. HE AGREED, HOWEVER, TO REFER MATTER TO LONDON, BUT ADVISED MALTESE NOT TO PRESENT THIS AS DEMAND IF THEY WISH TO GET SYMPATHETIC AND REASONABLE REPLY. ONLY MALTESE ARGUMENT IN RETURN WAS THAT LIBYANS WOULD NOT BE OPERATING FIC BUT ONLY OBSERVERS. MORETON REJECTED THIS INTERPRETATION. MORETON HAS REFERRED MATTER TO LONDON AND HE UNDERSTANDS IT HAS ALSO BEEN REFERRED TO DOUGLAS HOME AT COPENHAGEN. HIS RECOMMENDATION IS THAT QUESTION BE DEALT WITH PURELY ON SECURITY GROUNDS WITH FURTHER RECOMMENDATION FOR FAVORABLE REPLY ON CONDITIONS THAT LIBYANS BE ESCORTED FROM LUQA GATES INTO FIC AND ON EXIT AND THAT LIBYANS WOULD ONLY BE PERMITTED TO OBSERVE. MORETON UNDERSTANDS THAT IN FACT LIBYANS HAVE ALREADY VISITED FICS IN ITALY, EGYPT, ALGERIA. REQUEST WOULD FURTHER PROVIDE FOR SUCCESSIVE SMALL TEAMS OF LIBYANS COMING IN OVER SEVERAL WEEKS OR MONTHS.

5. AS MORETON POINTS OUT, SINCE LIBYANS HAVE NOW ACQUIRED FIR IT IS ONLY NATURAL THAT THEY WOULD WISH TO OBSERVE HOW EXISTING FIRS ARE RUN, AND HE SEES NO REASON TO REFUSE THIS REQUEST SO LONG AS SECURITY QUESTION CAN BE HANDLED PROPERLY.

6. COMMENT: WE TEND TO AGREE WITH MORETON. IF LIBYANS
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ARE TO OPERATE AND FIR, IT WOULD SEEM IN OUR INTEREST TO HAVE IT RUN PROPERLY. FURTHERMORE, LIBYANS AIR CONTROLLERS COULD APPRECIATE LIMITED ROLE OF FIC WITH REGARD TO ITS NON- POLITICAL AND NON- MILITARY CHARACTER.
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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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